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ABSTRACT

This is a report on the symposium on Modern Languages in Primary Education held in Copenhagen in September 1976, and organized by the Government of Denmark under the auspices of the Council of Europe. The aim of the symposium was to study the conditions for successful modern language learning at the primary level. The report contains a general outline of the symposium, plus: (1) summaries of the working papers; (2) summaries of the plenary sessions; (3) a summary by the general recorder; and (4) recommendations of the symposium. The main points of discussion were: (1) early teaching of modern languages in primary school in general; (2) continuity between the primary and the secondary stage; (3) language acquisition; (4) motivation and societal support for early modern language learning; and (5) the relationship between mother tongue and modern language learning with particular regard to disadvantaged children. Appendices contain: (a) a list of participants; (b) points for discussion suggested by the general recorder; (c) group discussion reports; and (d) a summary of the main recommendations of the Wiesbaden symposium of 1973. (AM)

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MODERN LANGUAGES IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

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COMMITTEE FOR GENERAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Symposium on

Modern Languages In Primary Education

Copenhagen, 20 - 25 September 1976

REPORT

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SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

Organisation

The symposium was organised by the Government of Denmark under the auspices of the Council for Cultural Co-operation of the Council of Europe. Meetings and accommodation were at the Scandinavian Seminar College, "Bakkerne", Holte, near Copenhagen. The Chairman of the symposium was Mr Jørgen Olsen and the Director was Mrs Kirsten Stenbjerre, both of the Danish Ministry of Education. The general rapporteur was Mr P H Hoy (United Kingdom). A full list of participants forms Appendix A of this report.

Aims

The principal aim of the symposium was to study the conditions for successful modern language learning at primary level. To that end, the following main points were discussed :

i. the early teaching of modern languages and the primary school as a whole;

ii. the problem of continuity between the primary and the secondary stage;

iii. the processes of language acquisition;

iv. motivation and societal support for early modern language learning;

v. the relationship between mother tongue and modern language learning with particular regard to disadvantaged children.

Methods

Preparatory documentation included five papers by experts dealing with points i - v above; a reading list from Dr Burstall, and three papers by the general rapporteur.

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In plenary sessions, there were three lectures, each followed by questions and discussion. In three groups, participants engaged in more detailed discussion based on a list of suggested topics (Appendix B) and on further points arising from the lectures and the preliminary papers. At the final plenary session, a series of recommendations extracted from the discussion groups' reports and recorded in Section V of this report was approved by all delegates.

Visits of observation were made to schools in the locality. The symposium was visited by representatives of the Danish and British press.

Additional activities

Outside the working programme, participants enjoyed generous hospitality from the Government of Denmark. After their first day's work, all participants were received by Mrs Ritt Bjerregaard, the Danish Minister of Education, in the impressive setting of Christiansborg Castle. Other notable visits kindly arranged by the Danish hosts for members of the symposium were to the Royal Ballet of Denmark, to Copenhagen by night, and to three historic castles including Elsinore. At a farewell dinner on the Friday evening, delegates took the opportunity to express their gratitude for the warm welcome they had received throughout the symposium, and for the excellent facilities provided at "Bakkerne".

SECTION II

SUMMARIES OF WORKING PAPERS

(The present report uses the abbreviation ETML for "the early teaching of modern languages")

CCC/EGT (74) 10 Report on the Wiesbaden Symposium "The Early Teaching of a Modern Language"

The recommendations of the Wiesbaden Symposium were constantly referred to in discussion at Copenhagen (see appendix D).

DECS/EGT (76) 39 The early teaching of modern languages : a summary of reports from sixteen countries, by Mr P H Hoy

This paper resulted from an investigation commissioned by the Council of Europe and carried out in 1975, mainly by means of a questionnaire sent to all CCC countries. It provides brief accounts of ETML in most of these countries and suggests three main conclusions :

i. that there is a European trend towards lowering the age at which modern languages are started in schools;

ii. that motivation for the development of ETML is at its strongest in countries which have a multi-lingual situation and/or a native language of small circulation;

iii. that the main problems concerning ETML are organisational, political, sociological pedagogical and financial.

DECS/EGT (76) 46 The conditions for success, by Mr P.H. Hoy

Based on the foregoing study, DECS/EGT (76) 39, this paper suggests the following points as the main conditions of success in ETML :

i. Clarity of long-term educational aims

The contribution of ETML to the education of young children should be clearly conceived within the broad perspective of the general primary curriculum;

ii. Clarity of short-term teaching objectives

Day-to-day objectives should be clearly defined, especially in relation to children's varied needs and abilities;

iii. Adequacy of administrative framework

Provision is needed for materials and equipment; teacher-supply; teacher support including in-service training facilities; continuity of work, especially between primary and secondary levels; and multiform evaluation of progress;

iv. Provision for pedagogical requirements

These conditions include the integration of ETML into the primary curriculum; provision for children's varied needs; satisfactory teaching conditions, especially in regard to the organisation of classes (heterogeneous ? homogeneous ?), and the provision of time, materials and equipment; and the agreement of participating teachers at primary and secondary level on basic pedagogical principles;

v. Societal support

The views of national and regional communities can be crucial :

a. in influencing the attitude of parents, teachers and children about ETML and

b. in determining the resources allocated to this activity.

The paper finally outlines possible obstacles to the success of ETML and suggests ways of overcoming these by national and international action.

CCC/EGT (76) Misc. 38 Points for discussion at the Copenhagen Symposium

This paper is reproduced as Appendix B of the present report.

DECS/EGT (76) 28 The problems of introducing modern language teaching into the primary school, by Madame Helen Hauri (Switzerland)

In Switzerland the introduction on an experimental basis of lessons in the second national language in the 1st, 3rd and 4th primary classes has produced numerous problems.

The question of the ideal age for beginning this study has not been decided and each linguistic community must find the solution which best suits its own political, social and educational circumstances.

Introducing a 2nd language without lengthening the school day means a revision of present primary curricula. The hypothesis that learning a second language would have a favourable influence on proficiency in the first and therefore justifies a reduction in first-language lessons requires further investigation.

Parents' and teachers' attitudes towards the second language determine those of the child, and since attitude is the main factor in success, everything possible must be done to gain the support of both teachers and public.

Modern methods cannot readily be used in primary education, which aims at developing the faculties of observation and discovery. New methods for teaching second languages are required. As the general objective in learning a second language at school is communication skill, ie the performance of speech acts in an interaction/action which is appropriate to the circumstances, the child will learn to communicate by communicating and not by manipulating structures with a view to producing correct sentences. Operational objectives should be defined with a view to monitoring and motivation, in the form of lists of speech acts and situations.

For reasons of educational psychology the 2nd language should be taught by the primary class teacher; and the linguistic and educational training of teachers is the main problem here.

Second language teaching methods should be altered at upper secondary level, so that future teachers will achieve a degree of proficiency in oral communication during their own studies which will be sufficient later if supplemented by a period of study abroad.

Proficiency levels of teachers already in service vary according to the individual, and should be measured by appropriate tests so that suitable further training programmes may be set up for each teacher.

Basic training should be supplemented continuously.

Continuity of instruction in the 2nd language at the secondary level must be ensured by a teaching programme which builds upon the primary work and is suited to secondary objectives, and by the further training of 2nd language teachers in accordance with new objectives.

Introducing a 2nd language at the primary level has implications for all other levels, including the university departments in which language teachers are trained.

DECS/EGT (76) 24 Early modern language teaching and the problem of continuity between primary and secondary levels, by Denis Girard (France)

1. Introduction :

"Continuity" refers to two things :

- uninterrupted early learning;

- the link between primary and secondary.

Here, it refers to the second aspect, but both are important.

2. Lessons to be learned from the English and French experiments :

C. Burstall found that the main problem encountered in England was an increasing inability to form homogeneous entering classes.

The same observation has been made in France. The attitudes of secondary modern language teachers towards EMLT depend directly upon the homogeneity of their classes.

Ideal continuity would be when all entering secondary pupils have had the same amount of early 2nd language experience; even then, the inevitable differences in level would have to be compensated for by setting.

Continuity at secondary level involves :

- organisational problems;
- the initial training of both primary and secondary teachers;
- their further training, with supportive guidance for the former and liaison between the two levels;
- the teaching aids employed.

3. Organisational problems :

The main obstacle to continuity between primary and secondary schools lies in the difficulty of controlling school populations. EMLT must be structured by geographical sector in relation to secondary schools and with the prior agreement of administrators, teachers and parents.

To respect freedom of choice of a main 2nd language in secondary school, extra lessons in the language studied at primary level should be offered when a different language is chosen at secondary level and research should be carried out to determine the amount retained.

4. Initial teacher training :

4.1 The qualifications of teachers engaged in EMLT vary widely. Training colleges should make serious efforts to ensure that all future teachers will have a sound foundation in the language and teaching skills. Practical courses at home and abroad are essential.

4.2 During their initial training, secondary language teachers should be made aware of the problems directly related to EMLT.

5. Further training and support :

Teachers engaging in EMLT should have continuous support, for three purposes : to enable them to improve their command of the language, to assist them in their teaching practice, and to ensure liaison with the secondary level. The last objective is more easily achieved when this assistance is provided on a part-time basis by the secondary language teacher.

Here again, the findings in Great Britain and France over a 10-year period are conclusive.

6. Continuity in teaching aids :

Most of the methods developed for EMLT stop at the end of the primary school. Among the fortunate exceptions are the Happy Families-Happy Days sequence used in teaching English in France and, above all, the En avant-A votre avis series which covers the 8-16 age-group for the teaching of French in England.

Methods for complete beginners are especially to be avoided, for they are very likely to discourage pupils who have already been studying a 2nd language for 3 years - even if the rate of progress is speeded up. Methods providing continuity at secondary level must satisfy two basic requirements: they must take advantage of pupils' past learning and strengthen and extend it, and they must arouse fresh interest by change of presentation and consideration of age-group.

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7. Conclusion :

Although this study refers to other findings, it has been based principally upon the British and French experiments.

The ideas put forward are designed primarily to arouse discussion and suggest lines of research.

DECS/EGT (76) 18 The psycholinguistic and pedagogical pre-requisites of modern language learning, by Mr G. Bastin (Belgium)

An experiment in educational psychology carried out in the first two years of a secondary school in Liège has produced, a few factors relating to success and failure in the audio-oral learning of modern languages.

The following may be mentioned :

i. firm command of learned elements of basic tongue (current grammar, spelling, reading);

ii. ability to construct sentences correctly in basic tongue;

iii. command of inductive and deductive processes;

iv. motivation for the verbal aspect of knowledge;

v. unimpaired hearing;

vi. instrumental aspects : reception, memorisation, utterance, rhythmic structuring.

Comparison of these results with those obtained by linguistic psychologists such as Carroll and Pimsleur shows a large number of converging features.

On this basis we may safely put forward a few consideration relating to the early learning of modern languages at school. First of all, let us make clear that we are not concerned with natural bilingualism but with the learning of a subject in a school, where the individual's basic affective needs are not involved.

The failure rate in modern languages of the secondary level may be estimated at no less than 20-25% of the total schoo population. This figure may be partly explained by a failure to respect certain learning pre-requisites. Chief among these is an adequate command of the basic tongue; including manipulation of sentence structures on one hand, and familiarity with the automatisms of the written language on the other. Difficulties encountered in these areas show closest correlation with the failure to learn a second language at the oral level.

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If this is true of a population of children who have already completed their primary schooling - a pre-selected population - how much greater must be the linguistic deficiences of younger children ! If some children's low linguistic learning aptitudes prevent them from acquiring an adequate command of their basic tongue at the end of twelve years, six of which are spent at school, and notwithstanding the flexibility of their brains (Penfield), is it really necessary to further complicate matters by adding a second language ?

In our opinion, therefore, it is a serious educational error to subject all 8 - 9 or 10 year-old children to early modern language learning. We recommend that the age at which such lessons begin be determined not by reference to pupils' chronological age or to their years at school, but to their level of linguistic maturity as measured by an examination of their ability to handle the structures of their first language and their basic knowledge of reading, spelling and grammar, which are the educational indicators of a command of essential linguistic mechanisms. It is now possible to determine this level of linguistic maturity.

Instruction which encourages spontaneous oral expression and the manipulation of the structures of the basic tongue may be provided as a preventive measure.

DECS/EGT (76) 38 Societal support for ETML: the effects of public opinion on the motivation and attitudes of children, parents, teachers and administrators, by Egon Foldberg and Carl Sørensen (Denmark)

The authors have for some years been engaged in an attempt to investigate public opinion regarding TML and ETML, specifically that of English in Denmark, where English has now been laid down officially as first foreign language, closely approximating the status of second language. In so doing, they have circulated a set of questionnaires among children and their parents. The categories involved children and parents with and without experience of an early start on foreign language learning. Also, they included a group of children and parents with no experience of FLT as yet.

The authors believe through the responses to the questionnaires to have gained some insight into public opinion (ie that of non-experts of FLT), regarding foreign language teaching, its methods, the optimal time to start etc. The questionnaires and an extract of the responses of children and parents are contained in the paper.

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Further conclusions, based on the questionnaires, and supplemented by interviews with children, parents, teachers and administrators are that syllabus developers, textbook writers, teachers, and teacher trainers have relied too long and too heavily on an assumption or rather a hunch that their pupils have a natural built-in motivation to learn a foreign language. The need to do so is taken more for granted in small linguistic entities like Denmark, where arguments in favour have hardly seemed necessary.

For this reason the motivational factors involved in learning a foreign language have so far been insufficiently investigated, the need for the citizen of a small country to learn a foreign language having been taken for granted, ie that citizen who was able to enjoy the privilege of secondary education, and so belonged to a chosen élite who were to be enabled to read the accepted literature of the foreign country in question.

It is important to fact up to the fact that the "need" is by no means in all respects a "natural" need. Any need established in the classroom away from the natural L2 surroundings is bound to be more or less artificial. Other motivational sources than the so-called natural ones must therefore be found.

Rather than build on drives towards investigation, sensory gratification, activity, manipulation, and cognition, which largely held their rewards in themselves, syllabus and textbook writers have tended to hold out a distant promise of reward at the end of the course, and it is not surprising if children lose sight of this as they founder in a morass of mechanical drills.

It is the contention of the authors that the responses of the children to questionnaires give useful pointers to a consumer-oriented answer to the question of WHY one should learn a foreign language, and that this answer might be useful to syllabus developers, administrators, advisers, and teachers in the field of foreign languages.

DECS/EGT (76) 27 <u>The relationship between mother tongue and modern language learning with particular reference to disadvantaged children by Professor E W Hawkins (United Kingdom)</u>

The paper is in three sections :

1. Possible effect (negative or positive) of foreign language learning on mother tongue or on cognition generally.

2. Review of research on "linguistic disadvantage".

3. Outline of a possible programme of language study in primary school in which the primary school role is seen less as teaching specific foreign languages than as laying foundations for foreign language study and setting up appropriate learning expectations for a coherent secondary school education in "language".

Section One

The United Kingdom Pilot Scheme ("French from Eight") and the evaluation by the National Foundation for Educational Research. In line with other research (in USA), the "Burstall" report found no evidence of positive or negative effect of foreign language on mother tongue learning.

The Burstall report, however, leaves relevant questions unanswered.

The special difficulty of the "integrated" timetable considered.

The dangers of allowing the foreign language to be an optional element in the timetable are reviewed.

The conclusion is drawn that decisions for or against the inclusion of a foreign language in the timetable must be taken on the merits of the subject itself not on grounds of any possible effects on other subjects.

Section Two

The situation of the linguistically disadvantaged child is considered. Evidence concerning bilingualism as a possible handicap is reviewed and the views of Lambert and Bruce-Gaarder summarised.

Conflicting views on the nature of linguistic "deprivation" are examined. Oléron's work on the congenitally deaf indicates that deprivation of language does inhibit some forms of thinking, especially the power to make generalisations (eg "speed", "vehicle").

The contrary Piagetian hypothesis that language development depends on conceptual maturity is referred to.

The theories of Bernstein, Labov, H. Rosen are contrasted. Ferguson's "diglossia" is briefly reviewed and the hypotheses of Douglas Barnes, Bereiter and Engelmann, Hess & Shipman are considered.

The views of Joan Tough (Leeds) are quoted as being based on close observation of pre-school children, and the importance of "expectations" in language development is stressed.

Section Three

Features common to L1 and L2 learning are examined including "creation by analogy" and "short term memory" restraints.

A programme is suggested in which the primary schools' role would be seen as preparation for foreign language learning. The programme would aim at :

i. setting up expectations concerning successful foreign language learning;

ii. educating the ear;

iii. building confidence and "empathy" in face of what is strange and different;

iv. practice in making the new speech sound of several of our European neighbours (possibly supported by a simple European phonetic alphabet)

The programme would be elaborated jointly by the teachers of mother tongue, music, movement (rhythm) geography, and foreign language.

SECTION III

SUMMARIES OF PLENARY SESSIONS

1. Opening of the Symposium, Monday 20 September

The Symposium was opened by the Danish Minister of Education, Mrs Ritt Bjerregaard, who welcomed the participants to Denmark and expressed her interest in the subject of the conference. Quoting John Donne's "No man is an island", the Minister underlined the ever-growing need for communication across the frontiers of European countries. Mrs Bjerregaard was concerned that those who had been deprived of linguistic opportunities in the past should be enabled in future to acquire greater powers of communication with the ordinary citizens of other countries. She referred to the new school law in Denmark and hoped that its aims might be furthered by the early teaching of modern languages. The Minister wished the delegates every success in their work.

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In expressing his own welcome to the delegates, Mr Jørgen Olsen, Chairman of the Symposium, stressed the linguistic importance of the Symposium theme, and looked forward to the formulation of some significant and incisive recommendations. He introduced his colleague, Mrs K Stenbjerre, the Director of the Symposium, and also the other Danish participants Mr Jegind, Mr Sørensen and Mr Foldberg.

Mr V de Pange, Deputy Director of Education and Head of the Division for General and Technical Education of the Council of Europe, thanked the Minister for her speech and the Symposium organisers for the hospitable welcome which participants had received. He brought greetings to the Minister and to the Symposium from Mr Georg Kahn-Ackermann, Secretary General of the Council of Europe. Mr. de Pange outlined the many functions of the Council of Europe, especially in the field of culture and education. He mentioned the CCC's major project on modern languages and related this to the three symposia - Turku, Wiesbaden and Copenhagen - in which the early teaching of modern languages had been studied. He mentioned the relationship between the present Symposium and the work of the Threshold Level team represented at "Bakkemne" by Dr van Ek. He introduced his administrative colleague Mr T Sigurdsson, together with the two secretaries and the two interpreters, who all came from the Council of Europe's headquarters at Strasbourg.

2. Lecture by Dr J A van Ek, Monday 20 September

"SIGNIFICANCE OF THE THRESHOLD LEVEL IN THE EARLY TEACHING OF MODERN LANGUAGES"

In this lecture, of which the full text is published by the Council of Europe as DECS/EGT (76) 45, with the same title, Dr van Ek said that educators had the heavy responsibility of ensuring that after ten years or so of organised education children could play an adequate part in our increasingly complex society. "We cannot afford to gamble with our children's time". Experimentation in schools must therefore be subject to precautions to ensure that the children would not be the losers. One such precaution concerning ETML was advocated in the main argument of the lecture.

In Dr van Ek's opinion the one convincing argument for ETML was the following :

> "In a society where the ability to use at least one foreign language is considered indispensable, and where compulsory secondary education cannot provide enough time to guarantee the acquisition of this ability, it is necessary to start foreign language learning in primary education so that most children will reach at least a minimum objective before they leave the secondary school."

If this argument is accepted it follows that "foreign language teaching must be considered as one on-going activity which cuts right across the boundary line between primary and secondary education". This concept would admittedly create constraints, but without such continuity modern language teaching in primary schools was "...a waste of time and ought to be prevented".

Meanwhile a minimum objective for modern languages in secondary education had been developed; this had been approved at a meeting at Strasbourg in June 1976 by delegates from a dozen European countries. It was the "Threshold Level for Schools" which should enable the secondary school learner"...to survive, linguistically speaking, in temporary contacts with foreign language speakers". Dr van Ek recommended the "Threshold Level for Schools" as a basis for defining an objective for ETML. "For the first time versions of one and the same common objective are being introduced in various countries both in adult education and in local school education...The early teaching of modern languages has its natural place in this development."

Discussion on Dr van Ek's lecture included consideration of the various arguments for ETML and a request for information about the Threshold Level as applied to French, German and Spanish. The Symposium recommended that the Council of Europe should convene a working group to consider the proposals made in this lecture. (See Section V of this report, Recommendation No. 2).

3. Lecture by Dr C. Burstall, Tuesday 21 September

"THE BRITISH PRIMARY FRENCH EXPERIMENT IN AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE"

The following text is Dr Burstall's own summary of her lecture, published by the Council of Europe under the above title as DECS/EGT (76) 30.

It is now almost two years since Primary French in the Balance, the final report to arise from the British primary French experiment, was published. It would therefore seem timely to take stock of the research evidence currently available in the field of second-language learning and to see how the findings presented in the British report have withstood the test of time.

i. Optimum starting-age for second-language learning

A commonly-held belief for 20 years and more has been that younger children, for physiological reasons, are better-equipped than older children or adults to learn foreign languages with speed and efficiency. The findings of the British primary French experiment ran completely counter to this view: given an equal amount of learning

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time, older children learned French more efficienctly than younger ones did. Since the publication of Primary French in the Balance, a wealth of further research has been reported, comparing the language-learning proficiency of older and younger students : without exception, the findings support those of the British experiment. The general trend of the available evidence is that, other things being equal, older children and adults learn foreign languages better and faster than younger children do. A major international survey reaching these conclusions is that reported by Carroll in 1975, under the title The Teaching of French as a Foreign Language in Eight Countries. A large number of smaller-scale experiments producing similar findings can also be cited.

ii. Sex differences

In the British experiment, a persistent finding was that girls consistently reached a higher level of achievement in French than boys did. The international survey mentioned above (Carroll, 1975) also found sex differences in achievement in French favouring the girls, but only in English-speaking countries.

Carroll put forward the possibility that a stereotype of femininity might be associated with the study of French in English-speaking countries, but recent research in Canada does not add support to this view : in the Canadian setting, there is little evidence to suggest that girls are superior to boys in the second-language learning situation.

iii. Social class differences

The British experiment revealed a close association between the socio-economic status of the child and his attitude towards learning French and eventual level of achievement. Both Carroll's survey and other more recent research have confirmed a high correlation between socio-economic status and drop-out rate from language programmes. Carroll also points out the high correlation between general verbal ability and proficiency in French, which raises the question of selection for foreign-language learning on the basis of aptitude.

iv. Motivational factors

Primary French in the Balance presented firm evidence that attitude and achievement go hand in hand. Data from Carroll's survey indicate how specific this association can be. Carroll concludes that students' needs and aspirations should be taken into account for selection and guidance purposes and utilised in the planning of foreign-language programmes.

v. Parental support

In the British experiment, there was evidence that parental support and encouragement crucially influenced children's attitudes towards learning French and their subsequent level of achievement. Carroll's survey also found that parental approval was correlated with achievement in French, particularly during the early stages of learning. This finding is supported by recent Canadian research.

vi. Use of mother tongue

In the British context, highly fluent classes tended to be those in which little or no English was used during the French lesson. There was also some evidence, however, that the total exclusion of English could be counter-productive, particularly during the early stages of learning French: many children who felt that they were making little or no headway in French blamed the absence of adequate explanation in English for their lack of progress. The Carroll survey also found that fluency in French was correlated with the extent to which the mother tongue was used in the French lesson, but that the use of the mother tongue was necessary to "set the scene" and to establish positive motivation during the early stages of learning. This finding has since been confirmed by studies carried out in Germany, Sweden and Canada.

vii. Travel abroad

The findings of the British experiment suggested that travel abroad was a potent factor in the development of positive attitudes towards the spoken use of the foreign language. Little further evidence has come to light on this point, although recent Canadian research suggests that adequate preparation for the foreign travel and effective follow-up activities are all important in determining the benefits likely to accrue from the experience.

viii. Class size

No evidence was found in the British experiment of any correlation between class size and level of achievement in French. Recent research suggests, however, that it may be the quality of life in large and small classes which should be investigated more closely, rather than the overall measurement of achievement. There is some evidence that slower learners derive real benefits from being taught in smaller classes : such effects would not be revealed by standard achievement testing, but would require sensitive observational techniques.

ix. Other areas of the curriculum

There was no evidence, from the British experiment to suggest that the early introduction of French has any deleterious effect on achievement in other areas of the primary school curriculum. This finding, already well-supported, has received further confirmation from recent Canadian research.

x. Distribution of teaching time

All the children taking part in the British experiment were taught French for similar periods of time, so there was no opportunity to study the effects of any differential distribution of teaching time. Recent research in Canada, Rumania and Bulgaria suggests that periods of intensive teaching may be more effective than evenly-spaced teaching time. Even here, however, the available evidence points to the greater efficiency of the older learner.

Discussion (notes by general rapporteur)

Almost a day was spent in discussion of Dr Burstall's lecture and of her report on the British pilot experiment "Primary French in the Balance". In answer to some twenty questions from delegates, Dr Burstall provided detailed information about this experiment and her evaluation of it. The questions asked could be grouped under the following main headings :

a. Methods, materials and teaching techniques;

b. Linguistic and pedagogical competance of teachers;

c. Administrative arrangements, especially primary-secondary continuity;

d. Techniques of evaluation;

e. The nature of the child sample used in the experiment.

Dr Burstall and the British delegation vigorously opposed any suggestion that the experiment had been a failure or that the results were pessimistic. They emphasised that in many areas of England and Wales some children within the French Pilot Scheme had succeeded brilliantly in acquiring a great deal of French, and that the experiment as a whole had entirely fulfilled its purpose of advising the Local Education Authorities of England and Wales whether primary French should be generally adopted or not. Dr Burstall's advice against expansion was

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unlikely to be followed to the same extent by all of the 105 English and Welsh Local Education Authorities, who enjoyed a large measure of autonomy in deciding curricular matters. In any case advice offered to administrators in the United Kingdom was rarely exportable to other countries without a considerable degree of modification. What might, however, be of interest and value to other member states of the Council of Europe was the large number of objective research findings on pedagogical matters in Dr Burstall's report, eg :

i. The need for differentiation of aims and methods for children of varied needs, aptitudes, abilities and backgrounds;

ii. The importance of supplying children with means of communication in the modern language studied which would correspond to their own interests;

iii. The frequent need for the use of the mother tongue in foreign language lessons. In a subject where "the message is also the medium" children may be confused unless they have been given a preliminary explanation of the situational context in their native language;

iv. The dangers of excessive and injudicious use of the tape-recorder.

Several delegates made a point which may be of importance for future Council of Europe activities in modern languages. This was that administrators seeking expert advice had not yet received a definitive ruling on the optimum age for starting the study of a foreign language. Future research, investigation and dissemination of knowledge are urgently needed in this area, but a passage from Jakobovits quoted in Dr Burstall's lecture is worth reproducing in the present report :

"The question of when foreign languages are to be taught within an educational system is a complex problem that involves political, social, philosophical, and psychological considerations and should not be reduced to a matter of neurophysiology as it has become fashionable to do in recent years. Since the socio-political context varies from place to place, not only on the international

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plane but also within a particular country....the decision must be considered by each school district in the light of the conditions that prevail within its geographic boundary. The knowledge that has accumulated on this matter indicates that there are both advantages and disadvantages to foreign-language study at any age compared to any other age." (Jakobovits L.A. (1970) "Foreign Language Learning, a Psycholinguistic Analysis of the Issues", Rowley: Newbury House, USA.)

4. Talk on the Danish Educational System by Mr Ebbe Jegind, Tuesday 21 September

Mr Jegind outlined the evolution of the Danish school system and the significance of the 1976 school law. This talk was an introduction to the visits to schools which Mr Jegind had kindly organised for delegates and which were envisaged as an "oasis" of practical experience amidst a week of theoretical considerations. On Wednesday morning, 22 September, members of the symposium were hospitably received at schools in the neighbourhood of the conference centre, two or three delegates per school, and were deeply interested to see examples of language teaching in action.

5. Lecture by Mr Per Malmberg (Sweden), Thursday 23 September

"INDIVIDUAL TREATMENT IN THE EARLY TEACHING OF MODERN LANGUAGES"

Mr Malmberg provided a preliminary definition of individualised instruction in modern languages, based on principles laid down at a Californian conference which included teachers of both older and younger children. The definition was by Professor Ronald Gougher in the Britannica Review of Foreign Language Education. vol. III 1971. It implied the use of a learner-centred classroom, in which instruction would be tailored to the expressed needs of learners, who might work individually or in groups. The lecturer discussed means of discovering the needs and personal interests of learners as a basis for work in the target language.

The second part of the lecture surveyed relevant work in Nordic comprehensive schools, where unstreamed classes are making new, and ever greater, demands on teachers' pedagogical skill and on the teaching resources available. Although "built-in flexibility" is essential, a frequently found division of time is :

1/3 with the whole class
1/3 in group work
1/3 in purely individualised instruction.

Teachers often work in teams, meeting each week to plan the following week's work, sometimes with the co-operation of learner representatives. Mr Malmberg illustrated his points with vivid and amusing diagrams which showed various techniques of individualised teaching; these included:

i. Pupils' own choice of tasks;

ii. Self-instructional materials;

iii. Self-checkable questions;

iv. Records of work, kept by the student, who thus "competes with himself";

v. Group-work arranged on a "station" basis in which each classroom area or "station" houses a different activity;

vi. Progressive assignments on the Danish "circle" model, in which more advanced pupils proceed step-wise according to the results of tests.

In the discussion which followed the lecture delegates expressed interest as to how the techniques quoted by Mr Malmberg could be adapted for use with younger children. The lecture and the discussion were rich in practical information and ideas.

6. Final session of the symposium, Saturday 25 September

Copies of group report in French and English (see appendix D) were distributed to all delegates and were presented to the plenary session in short talks by discussion group chairmen. The recommendations (listed in Section V of this report) were also distributed in French and English versions, and after some modification as a result of plenary discussion, were unanimously adopted by the members of the symposium.

In their closing remarks Mr T Sigurdsson, for the Council of Europe, thanked the Danish Government for the cordial hospitality and the fine organisation shown by all concerned, and especially by the Chairman and Director of the symposium; the general rapporteur summarised some of the leading ideas of the symposium and thanked the discussion groups for formulating some valuable recommendations and Mr Olsen thanked the delegates, group chairmen and rapporteurs, all conference officials and the staff of "Bakkerne" for their splendid contributions to a successful and enjoyable week.

SECTION IV

SUMMARY BY THE GENERAL RAPPORTEUR

The preparatory documentation, the lectures and the discussions at this symposium repeatedly underlined certain conditions for the success of ETML, notably :

i. the vital importance of societal support, linked with the adaptation of aims, objectives and methods to suit national and regional conditions and to satisfy the linguistic needs arising from these;

ii. the crucial need for differentiation in the treatment of children of varied needs, interests and abilities;

iii. the necessity for continuity in terms of organisation and pedagogical approach;

iv. the need for constant study of the relationship between the learning of L1 and L2 (mother tongue and target language).

As is clear from Recommendation No. 1 most European countries share a deep conviction that ETML is a valuable and even indispensable activity. Many countries regard the justification for ETML as self-evident, but for those who require a rationale for this part of the curriculum, a useful suggestion is provided by Dr van Ek's opinion that "....it is necessary to start foreign language learning in primary education so that most children will reach at least a minimum objective before they leave the secondary school". This view is almost identical with Carroll's conclusion reported in "The Teaching of French as a Foreign Language in Eight Countries" and quoted in Dr Burstall's lecture to this symposium :

"That data....suggest that the primary factor in the attainment of proficiency in French (and presumably, any foreign language) is the amount of instructional time provided. The study provides no clear evidence that there is any special advantage in starting the study of a foreign language very early other than the fact that this may provide the student more time to attain a desired performance level at a given age." Such ideas are also compatible with Professor E W Hawkins' proposal (endorsed by the symposium in Recommendation No. 7) for a preparatory course at primary level involving ear-training, empathy and the creation of positive expectations about language-learning, the whole to be linked with geography, music, movement and the learning of

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the mother tongue. Professor Hawkins' suggestion would in turn meet Mr Bastin's requirement that the teaching of younger children should "....promote greater linguistic maturity and thus pave the way for the earliest possible introduction of a second language at school."

From these ideas there emerges the possibility of a coherent scheme which might fulfil the conditions of success outlined in i - iv. Such a scheme would comprise :

a. a preparatory course designed to overcome individual difficulties such as the linguistic deprivation mentioned by the Danish Minister for Education in opening the symposium;

b. a modern language course for young children which would provide built-in continuity with the secondary stage;

c. a secondary course of defined content, possibly based on the Threshold Level for Schools, and providing all pupils with a minimal target which would have clear practical value and would be adaptable to the needs of the individual and of society.

In the light of these considerations, among many others, the 14 Recommendations (in Section V of this report) and the group discussion reports (in appendix D) merit the most careful study. They are the fruits of a memorable symposium, which has aroused much international interest and which derived its valuable qualities from careful preparatory work by the Secretariat of the Council of Europe; from the spirit of vigorous and friendly co-operation created by the Chairman and Director of the symposium and their colleagues; and from the charming and hospitable environment provided by the Government of Denmark as hosts to the symposium.

SECTION V

RECOMMENDATIONS

General

1. After considering the material available to it, including research findings, records of experience and previous symposium reports, this Symposium recommends that the Council of Europe should continue its support for the early teaching of modern languages by maintaining and developing the policy initiated in the Ministers' Resolution (69) 2 and elaborated in the Wiesbaden Symposium Report.

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Research and development

2. The delegates at the Copenhagen Symposium recommend that the Council of Europe should call together a working group of experts in the field of the early teaching of modern languages. The task of this group would be to examine the feasibility of organising the content of modern language courses in such a way that the early stages could be related to the minimal objectives of later stages.

   The group should :

   i. take account of the proposals made by Dr van Ek at the Copenhagen Symposium in his lecture on the "Significance of the Threshold Level in the early teaching of modern languages", and

   ii. relate its work to the "Threshold Level for Schools" as a minimal final objective in secondary education.

   The group should pay special attention:

   i. to the early teaching of modern languages as formulated in the Ministers' Resolution (69) 2,

   ii. to the influence of the early teaching of modern languages on the total development of the child,

   iii. to the question of motivation, taking into account the recommendations of the Wiesbaden Symposium,

   iv. to the various motivational factors found in individual countries and regions.

3. In view of the misinterpretation in some countries of certain research work, the Symposium recommends that member States should be made aware of the danger of using the findings of any research project carried out under specific conditions in other countries as the sole basis for policy decisions.

4. The Symposium recommends that further research work on ETML should rely not only on standard achievement testing but should also include all aspects of educational experience in ETML classes.

5. The Symposium recommends that reports on empirical research should include, in addition to statistical details, information on learning conditions of ETML classes and control groups such as :

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a. aims and objectives,

b. means of achieving these aims and objectives,

c. organisation, eg time allocation, size of classes, ability-range within each class, and general conditions concerning continuity.

6. The Symposium recommends that ways of promoting ETML outside the CCC action programme should also be explored and that member States should be encouraged to set up further pilot projects in order to identify possible obstacles to progress within their own boundaries.

7. The Symposium recommends that the suggestions made in paragraphs 3.4 and 3.5 of paper DECS/EGT (76) 27 by Professor E W Hawkins regarding the preparation of children for language study should receive further attention with a view to the setting up of pilot experiments.

Professor Hawkins has summarised the paragraphs mentioned in this Recommendation as follows :

"A programme is suggested in which the primary schools' role would be seen as preparation for foreign language learning. The programme would aim at :

i. setting up expectations concerning successful foreign language learning;

ii. educating the ear;

iii. building confidence and "empathy" in face of what is strange and different;

iv. practice in making the new speech sounds of several of our European neighbours (possibly supported by a simple European phonetic alphabet).

The programme would be elaborated jointly by the teachers of mother tongue, music, movement (rhythm), geography, and foreign language."

8. The Symposium recommends that the contents of DECS/EGT (76) 46, "THE CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS", should be widely publicised, possibly in a paper containing relevant material from the Turku, Wiesbaden and Copenhagen Symposia.

9. The Symposium recommends particular attention to the following conditions of success in ETML :

a. Teacher preparation, in its complementary aspects of linguistic and pedagogical training, and the development of this dual competence through regular courses within a scheme for in-service training;

b. Regular continuous assessment and the evaluation of progress leading to changes when these are conducive to greater efficiency;

c. The pooling and dissemination of information concerning pilot experiments and research in progress in various countries;

d. The guarantee, from the start of the ETML project, of an indispensable minimum of resources - financial, technological, material - the absence of which may produce insurmountable obstacles.

10. The Symposium recommends the following measures of European co-operation to overcome obstacles to the introduction of the ETML. These are quoted from DECS/EGT (76) 46 :

a. Stress can be laid on international idealism as a motivating force for teachers, parents and administrators, in the belief that their resulting positive attitudes will influence the children's own outlook on ETML;

b. The CCC might develop still further its existing encouragement of the pooling and dissemination of information, e g by encouraging countries to publish details of successful projects by means of broadsheets, films or vidotapes. European stimulus might also lead to more effective evaluation of equipment, materials and teaching methods;

c. The CCC's existing encouragement for international contacts might be continued and even intensified in relation to ETML. The atmosphere of positive encouragement which the CCC engenders for linguistic initiatives and achievements is widely recognised as a valuable matrix for future developments;

d. Work in ETML might be linked with the basic principles of "The Threshold Level".

e. The CCC might launch a project of the "individualisation" of work in the ETML;

f. The CCC might commission a study of the relations between ETML and modern primary school methods based on discovery and creativity.

11. Bearing in mind Recommendations C and D of the Wiesbaden Symposium, 1973, the Symposium recommends that syllabuses and teaching materials should try to build more on natural drives towards investigation, problem-solving, activity and cognition.

12. The Symposium recommends that teaching materials for the learning of the mother tongue and for ETML should be based on common theoretical principles.

13. Considering that in most countries ETML takes place across the ability-range, the Symposium recommends that the following measures be taken to alleviate difficulties caused by differences in children's ability :

a. The reduction of the size of classes as far as it is possible;

b. The differentiation and individualisation of teaching methods;

c. The pooling and dissemination of ideas on teaching methods applicable to classes of mixed ability;

d. The pooling and dissemination of ideas on the integration of ETML with work in other subjects of the curriculum;

e. Supplementary or remedial teaching for slower learners;

f. The creation, where this is consistent with national policy, of groups which are as homogeneous as possible, provided that the aims and objectives of the course represent a minimal target open to all pupils to attempt.

14. The Symposium recommends that every possible means should be employed to facilitate periodic visits to the children' classes by native-speaking students or language assistants or by the exchange of practicing teachers, and that teachers of younger children should be afforded adequate financial and other support to enable them to spend a continuous period of residence in the country of the language studied.

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A P P E N D I X B

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION SUGGESTED

by

Mr P HOY, General Rapporteur

The following suggestions are for the general guidance of discussion groups but will no doubt be supplemented by additional points arising from the papers and transactions of the Symposium.

1. How does the group evaluate the total information available (research findings, records of experience, public opinion, previous symposium recommendations, etc) as indicators of "...the feasibility of introducing at least one widely spoken foreign language into the curriculum of all European school children at the earlies possible stage before the age of 10". (Ministers' Resolution (69) 2, Recommendation 1, para. 6) ?

2. What is the place of ETML in the total education of younger children ? For example, how far can ETML be regarded as a positive social influence, with compensatory and democratising values ? In particular how important and how feasible are contacts with native speakers and the foreign countries concerned ?

3. Does the discussion group accept the conditions for the success of ETML outlined in DECS/EGT (75) 92 and developed by contributors to the Symposium ?

4. How can obstacles to the expansion of ETML be overcome by national and international action ?

5. What conclusions concerning ETML can be drawn from recent information on how children learn languages ? In particular, what reforms and developments are needed in pedagogical approaches, methods, materials and techniques ?

6. What is, or should be, the relationship between ETML and the learning of the mother tongue ?

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7. What implications for the development of ETML are inherent in the work of the "Threshold Level" group ?

8. Should ETML invariably be provided across the whole ability range ? If so, what provision should be made for children of varied needs and ability ? What are the implications concerning setting, mixed ability classes and group work ?

9. What are the special problems and opportunities offered by ETML in multilingual communities ?

10. What contribution might the Council of Europe make to the future development of ETML ?

A P P E N D I X C

GROUP DISCUSSION REPORTS

GROUP A (FRANCOPHONE)

1. The Group holds that it is advisable to maintain the resolution adopted by the deputies of Ministers of Education, 25 January 1969 on ETML, notably the B - recommendations of the 1973 Wiesbaden Symposium report, without losing sight of specific national circumstances. Accordingly, it seems to the Group that works recently published in this area do not provide such fresh evidence as to call for a completely new approach.

2. The Group believes that teaching of modern languages as a subject opening the child to the world, is likely to further the personal development of the child and his social integration. Moreover, the Group submits that this teaching seems likely to bring about a wider democratisation to the extent that it has not become a selective process.

   Of course, contacts with native speakers of foreign countries are desirable and means to make them possible should be worked out (cf. Recommendations G, H p.23 - 24).

   Consequently, such contacts should be encouraged whenever they are geographically feasible or when they can take place by an exchange of information (eg. correspondence between pupils, exchange of tapes or cassettes, the media).

3. The Group accepts the conditions for success as they are formulated in the document DECS/EGT (76) 46. However, it submits that particular attention should be paid to the following points, since the others were already embodied in the recommendations of other texts, including the final report of the Wiesbaden Symposium, 1973 :

   a. The linguistic and pedagogical training of teachers which are of necessity complementary, the updating and development of this dual competence by setting up regular in-service courses as part of an ongoing training.

   b. A continuous evaluation carried out on a regular basis will make possible such reviews and changes as necessary to upgrade teaching efficiency.

c. The problem of a permanent exchange of information covering pilot experiments and research being carried out in various countries. (Recommendation H of Wiesbaden).

Finally the Group considers that in ETML, unless an indespensable minimum is guaranteed in terms of material, technological and financial means, right from the outset, intractable difficulties might come about.

ANSWERS FROM GROUP A (FRANCOPHONE) TO QUESTIONS 7 AND 8

7. The Group believes that an extension of ETML cannot take place without taking into account the later stages of teaching in a given country. Accordingly, it thinks that the working group concerned should :

a. make proposals on continuity of modern language teaching throughout schooling,

b. pay particular attention to transitional problems between early teaching and a more structured teaching in later stages,

c. study the aims pertaining to each teaching level,

d. analyse and define the threshold-level for any given type of teaching,

e. pay particular attention to the specific character of threshold-level for each language.

8. In principle the Group answer this question positively provided that due weight is given to very specific situations where early teaching of L2 would add seriously to the child's existing difficulties.

Anyway, the idea of ETML ability requires further definition.

In order to tone down handicaps due to varying abilities the Group suggests that the following steps be taken, i.a.

a. a sensible curtailment of the number of pupils in a given class,

b. a more differentiated and individualized teaching,

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c. teaching of a supporting type,

d. groups with as homogeneous as possible a level, but the level of attainment to be reached should be the same for all pupils, without losing sight of specific national circumstances.

GROUP B

Question 1

There was general agreement in the Group that the total information available to it on the feasibility of ETML was not sufficient to enable it to make a final pronouncement on this subject.

It was felt that the available information did not take into account all the relevant considerations involved in ETML in the various European countries.

For the following reasons the research findings were regarded as having limited validity :

a. Too great reliance had been placed on results obtained from the use of one particular teaching method ;

b. Insufficient cognizance had been taken of important factors such as motivation and the attitudes of teachers, pupils and parents; and

c. Achievement had been investigated only by standard achievement testing. Recent research suggests, however, that all aspects of educational experience in ETML classes should be closely investigated.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Group recommends that :

a. Further research work on ETML should rely not only on standard achievement testing but should also include all aspects of educational experience in ETML classes.

b. Reports on empirical research should include in addition to statistical details information on learning conditions of ETML classes and control groups such as : -

1. aims and objectives;

2. means of achieving those aims and objectives;

3. organisation, eg time allocation, size of classes and conditions for continuity.

GROUP B

Question 2

The Group considers that it is important for every child to have an equal opportunity of learning a second language, regardless of his socio-economic circumstances, mental capacity or the direction of his future education.

Contacts with native speakers and foreign countries are regarded as important for language learning. However, various factors enter into the question of travel abroad for children under the age of 10, viz., parental reluctance or anxiety, the difficulty of financing trips so as to ensure equal treatment of all children, and the questionable benefits to be derived from such trips when linguistic competence is elementary.

RECOMMENDATION

The Group, therefore, recommends that every possible means should be employed to facilitate periodic visits to the children's classes by native-speaking students or language assistants or by the exchange of practising teachers, and that teachers of such children should be afforded adequate financial and other support to enable them to spend a continuous period of residence in the country of the language.

Question 5

Bearing in mind Recommendations C and D of the Wiesbaden Symposium, 1973, the Group further recommends that syllabuses and teaching materials should try to build more on natural drives towards investigation, problem-solving, activity, cognition and creativity.

Question 9

In countries with bilingual or multilingual communities, where none of the national languages is a world language, the main problem is to find sufficient curricular time to enable a satisfactory standard of competence to be attained in a second national language and in a world language.

As competence in a world language opens up opportunities for study, international understanding and employment, the Group feels, however, that EIML is even more important in multilingual than in monolingual countries (vide DECS/EGT (76) 45 "Significance of the threshold-level in the early teaching of modern languages" by Dr. J.A. van EK, p.4).

GROUP C (Mixed)

Preamble

Before attempting to answer the questions assigned to it the Group feels it necessary to refer briefly to the position in which it finds itself. The members appreciate that the questions put to them by the Secretariat concern matters of major importance which have far-reaching implications for modern language teaching in the future and they agree that it would be helpful if they could offer in return some clear and precise answers. At the same time, as their discussions progressed they became increasingly aware that the general mood of 1976 contrasts markedly with that of 5 to 10 years ago and that, while fully supporting the desirability of EIML, they no longer feel the same certainty about when and how it might be introduced in any given country as was felt at the time of the Reading, Turku or Wiesbaden Symposia. They are thus somewhat reluctant to produce blanket recommendations for all member states, which could be misinterpreted, and would prefer to recommend that each country should study the questions in the context of its own circumstances and, while taking full account of the experience of other countries, should find answers relevant to its own needs.

Question 1

Experience in a number of countries (eg. Finland, Luxembourg, Sweden, and certain parts of France) where all children begin to learn the foreign language before the age of ten has indicated that EIML is feasible. Whether, however, it is practicable or advisable each country can only decide for itself. It is clear that EIML can only be promoted in countries where it is strongly favoured by public opinion and where in consequence the not inconsiderable financial resources necessary to support it will be forthcoming. In such countries a warm climate of public support is also likely to foster motivation and to strengthen the encouragement that pupils receive from their parents. While it is appropriate that the Council of Europe should continue to urge member states to extend modern language teaching to all pupils, it would now seem to be questionable whether any specific starting age should be proposed.

The Group therefore wishes to place strong emphasis upon the need for a flexible interpretation of the term EIML such as is given in the Wiesbaden Recommendation B.

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Question 2

Three questions are posed. The first was thought to be too wide for the Group to tackle in the time available and was set aside. With the second little progress was made, since discussion as to the meaning of "compensatory and democratising values" proved inconclusive, although it was generally agreed that the compulsory introduction of ETML may well exercise a positive social influence, in that it can offer every child the chance for a new educational experience and provide greater equality of opportunity. The third question was easier to answer, for the Group was in no doubt that contacts with the foreign country and with native speakers are extremely important in motivating pupils towards language learning. At the same time members felt compelled to record that such contacts are both costly and difficult to arrange and that it would be unrealistic to suppose that more than a small percentage of the total school population could be offered this privilege.

Question 3

The Group expressed its general agreement with the conditions for success outlined in paper 46 while pointing out that certain of them (eg 1.3) could not be applied uniformly in all countries. Moreover, it wished to stress emphatically th if these conditions were not observed pupils could suffer serious harm.

It therefore recommends that the contents of paper 46 should be widely publicised.

Question 4

a. This topic is treated in paragraph 4 of paper 46 and the Group fully accepts the answers given in 4.1 to 4.6, inclusive. It recommends that priority should be given to 4.6 and 4.4 (in that order) in the immediate future. The former would link ETML with current developments in foreign language teaching, while the latter could serve to dispel the suspicion of some primary teachers that the methodology of foreign language teaching is incompatible with the ethos of primary education - alluded to in paper 27 (1.23).

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b. The Group noted with regret that Dr. Burstall's report had been misinterpreted in some countries and had been used as a pretext for discouraging ETML. It therefore recommends that member states should be made aware of the danger of using the findings of any research project carried cut under specific conditions in other countries as the sole basis for policy decisions.

c. The Group recommends that ways of promoting ETML outside the CCC action programme should also be explored and that member states should be encouraged to set up further pilot projects in order to identify possible obstacles to progress within their own boundaries.

Question 6

This question caused difficulty since its intention was not fully understood. The topic had been studied in depth both at Turku and by Professor Hawkins in paper 27 and the Group did not consider itself competent to carry it further. It was noted that the recommendations of the Turku Symposium had had an influence, albeit gradual, in Finland and Norway, amongst other countries, and that in France a strong recommendation had been made that where possible the teaching of the mother tongue and ETML should be entrusted to the same teacher.

The attention of the Group was drawn to the methodology of the new English course "Kaleidoscope", produced at the University of York which claims to "bring to foreign language learning the freshness and appeal of activity and discovery methods". The trend thus represented was welcomed and the importance of children being able to identify with the foreign people within the range of their own experience in a real situation was emphasised.

The Group recommends that teaching materials for the learning of the mother tongue and for ETML should be based on common theoretical principles.

The Group expressed interest in the suggestions made by Professor Hawkins in paragraphs 3.4 and 3.5 of paper 27 regarding the preparation of children for language study and recommends that this theme should be further studied with a view to the setting up of pilot experiments.

A P P E N D I X D

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WIESBADEN SYMPOSIUM 1973

The following summary is included in the present report as an aide-mémoire, but is inevitably too short to do full justice to the very detailed recommendations to be found in the Wiesbaden Symposium Report, pp 19 - 25 (English version).

A. The start of early language teaching should be brought forward, as one means of improving the state of modern language teaching in Europe.

B. While early language teaching should be governed by each country's individual needs and opportunities, it seems generally advisable to begin at the age of 8 or 9. Research should be undertaken into the relationship between ETML and activities based on rhythm, music, physical expression, acting and mime.

C. In the initial stages of ETML the child should be placed in living contact with the foreign language; emphasis should be placed on conversation and games; reading, when introduced, should be appropriate to the children's ages and interests; writing should be kept to a strict minimum.

D. Materials should be :

i. appropriate to the child's level of maturity;

ii. usable in individual and group activities;

iii. linked with work in the pupil's mother tongue;

iv. suitable for use by non-specialist teachers.

E. ETML beginning at the age of 8 or 9 should be in the form of <u>daily</u> lessons, each of 20 - 40 minutes.

F. ETML should take place only when the conditions of continuity between the primary and post-primary levels can be fulfilled.

G. Pre-school and primary teachers of foreign languages should receive adequate linguistic and pedagogical preparation, including instruction in the nature of the target language as compared with the structures of the mother tongue.

H. With support from the CCC, information on research and experiments concerning ETML should be pooled and disseminate on a European basis, e.g. by CILT or CERI; current experiments and relevant reports should be critically examined; a further research plan should be drawn up; and in particular an enquiry should be carried out in a European country with experience of multilingual teaching at primary level. Also international exchanges at school level should be extended.